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## WORLD-POLITICS.

LONDON: ST. PETERSBURG.

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LONDON, *December, 1906.*

ENGLAND has shown an unwonted interest in the appointment of Sir Mortimer Durand's successor. The matter has been discussed perhaps more frankly than judiciously; but, at any rate, with a palpable desire to secure the best man, and the best man only, for the office. It is unusual, if not unprecedented, to find the leading London journals on a question of this kind attempting to influence the decision of the Foreign Office. The selection of an Ambassador to this capital or to that is a matter that is normally, I think I may say invariably, left for the authorities to settle in their own way. The press has never to my knowledge presumed to interfere with an expression of its views for or against any particular candidate. If the British Embassy at Paris fell vacant to-morrow, there would be, of course, a certain amount of speculation in the clubs and the lobbies of the House, and among diplomatists and their friends, as to who its next occupant would be. But neither the public nor the press would take any part in the discussion. There would be no canvassing of this or that man's availability, no attempt, not even a spasmodic one, to force the Government's hand, no genuine popular concern in the subject at all. Officialdom, after turning the situation over in undistracted quietude, would simply announce its decision, and its decision would be ratified as a matter of course by a full editorial chorus.

That there should have been, in this instance of the Washington Embassy, so complete a departure from precedent is a phenomenon of more than a little significance. It argues, for one thing, a consciousness among English people that the Washing-

ton Embassy is not as other Embassies, and that the special ties which unite England and America ought to find an adequate expression in the British representative at the American capital. But there is more in it than that. No one can have read the articles on the subject that have appeared in the London press without detecting an undertone of anxiety. There seems, first of all, to be a very general opinion that the ordinary type of professional diplomat, trained and possibly imbedded in European traditions, is precisely the type that is least needed at Washington. Sir Edward Grey has been importuned to look outside the ranks of the regular service for the man to fill what Sir Mortimer Durand has rightly called "the most important diplomatic post in the world." There is precedent for such action—Lord Pauncefoot, for instance, was a Foreign Office official when he was translated to Washington; but, naturally, it is a proceeding that is not relished by the regular service and one that a Foreign Secretary will only countenance when he is very sure of his ground. It may have been with some idea of assuring Sir Edward Grey that public opinion would support him that the London journals have, all but unanimously, urged the appointment of the best man, irrespective of whether he is a conventional diplomatist or not. As they have stated the case, the type of man who ought to represent England in the United States is the type of man who represents the United States in England—the broad-gauged, accomplished, many-sided man whose interests stretch far beyond protocols and despatches, who will make himself at home anywhere, who will rely more upon his personality than upon his office, and who will regard himself rather as an Ambassador to the American people than to the American Government. England's problem, in short, as one journal has put it, is to find a Whitelaw Reid.

Secondly, the feeling seems to obtain that the British Embassy at Washington has lost something of its former prestige, that Anglo-American relations have in consequence become slightly overcast and that the unparalleled predominance of Mr. Roosevelt over the thought and politics of America makes it essential that the British representative should, at any cost, be a man who is likely to prove congenial to the Rooseveltian temperament. Some of the London journals have harped on this string a little excessively. To read them, one might think that

Anglo-American good-will is in jeopardy because Baron von Sternberg rides with the President and M. Jusserand plays tennis with him. Americans, I conceive, must have been divided between laughter and irritation by the insistence of certain London journals upon these trivialities. But, unquestionably, in the minds of those Englishmen—now happily a growing number—who follow American affairs with keenness and knowledge, there is an uneasy suspicion that the intimacy which exists not only between the President and Baron von Sternberg, but between the President and the Kaiser, if it has not the positive effect of doing much to promote German interests, has the negative one of ousting Great Britain from the first place in American consideration and relegating her somewhat to the background. And I am bound to add that Englishmen to whom this suspicion is a reality have found a good deal to confirm it in Mr. Root's handling of the Newfoundland difficulty and in the dogmatic and almost minatory tone of his argument. The great bulk of Englishmen take all too little interest in Anglo-American questions, not because they are indifferent to anything that threatens even for a moment to ruffle the relations between the two countries, but because they assume beforehand—too confidently, in my judgment—that a friendly issue is a foregone conclusion, and that no Anglo-American question can ever again be really serious. Those who know America best do not share this complacency. To them Mr. Root's brusqueness seemed more than merely disagreeable, it seemed ominous. Its adoption emphasized, at any rate, the necessity of England's being represented at Washington by a man of peculiar parts and competency.

While I am on the general subject of Anglo-American relations, let me add that Great Britain, as the ally of one Power and the close friend of the other, is watching with keen solicitude every development in the unhappy dispute between the United States and Japan. Opinion here, while treating the difficulty over the schools as little or nothing in itself, regards it as the opening gun in a campaign against the unrestricted immigration of Japanese skilled and coolie labor, and as such fraught with quieting consequences. Englishmen endorse every word of the President's eulogy on the character and achievements of the Japanese people; but they perfectly understand why California should have rejected with such vehemence his appeal to Congress

for an Act to allow them to become American citizens. The whole incident is looked upon over here as by far the most important event in the foreign affairs of the United States since the Spanish war, and there is no attempt to minimize its gravity. The growth of anti-Japanese feeling throughout the United States since the Portsmouth Conference has been watched in England already with a good deal of concern. It is diagnosed as the product partly of a commercial rivalry that can only intensify with the years and partly of a suspicion in the back of the American mind that Japan, after benefiting enormously by the moral and financial support of America during the war, has since shown a remarkably short memory for the services rendered her. And now that this sentiment has been reinforced by an explosion of the long-smouldering antagonism of California against Japanese immigrants, Englishmen begin to fear lest matters may be nearing a crisis. Rightly or wrongly, they suspect that if such an agitation as led to the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Laws were to be engineered against the Japanese, it would find much in the present conditions of America to feed upon; and being stimulated by the new interest that is now being taken in the immigration problem as a whole, by the determination, never apparently sharper than to-day, that the United States must as far as possible be preserved as a white man's country, and by the rise of an American Labor party hostile to yellow competition in any form, it might end by sweeping all before it. That is a contingency Englishmen cannot from any standpoint contemplate without dismay. And they have two other reasons for being interested in the progress and upshot of the trouble. One is that California's position in the matter, relative to the United States as a whole, curiously resembles that of Newfoundland in the fisheries question, relative to the British Empire as a whole. The other is that both Australia and British Columbia are following every step in the agitation against the Japanese with an enthusiastic approval they make no pretence of hiding. It is America's turn to-day to deal with the problem of Japanese immigration; it may be Great Britain's to-morrow. By to-morrow, in this connection, I mean, of course, the date, still nine years distant, when the Anglo-Japanese Alliance comes up for renewal.

I have left myself little space in which to touch on home affairs. The Government, on the whole, has no reason to be dis-

satisfied with the results of its first year in office. It has passed more than forty bills into law; it has worked with an enthusiasm and energy almost if not quite without precedent in British annals; it has driven the Parliamentary machine with such force as to leave it trembling; and its exertions have immensely widened the scope of social and industrial democracy. If in the administration of Colonial affairs it has not been always happy, its foreign policy has been admirably firm without provocation and conciliatory without weakness. Mr. Chamberlain's illness, by providing Mr. Balfour with an unlooked-for opportunity, of which in his quiet and skilful way he is making the fullest use, to wean his party from food taxes, has demoralized the Opposition in the House of Commons; and the Government, as it looks back on its year's work, may fairly claim to have established a record for energetic and practical usefulness.

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ST. PETERSBURG, *December, 1906.*

RIP VAN WINKLE was not more surprised on his return home from his twenty years' sleep than a well-informed Russian would be who, having fallen into a slumber thirteen months ago, should suddenly awake to-day and take stock of the changes effected during his sojourn in the realm of dreams. Certainly more numerous and more stirring events were crowded in that short span of time than in the thirty years that preceded it. Armed insurrections, general and partial strikes, military and naval revolts, the follies of backsliding noblemen, murderous peasants, disaffected officials and provisional governments, in places hardly marked on the average map, were among the characteristics of the first year of the Russian Revolution. A twelvemonth ago the very existence of the Empire, the fate of the dynasty, the survival of the social system were all at stake. A complex of potent solvents appeared to be rapidly undermining the whole political and social fabric, and, sooth to say, nobody seemed very anxious to save them. For the fatalism of the Slav got the better of his other qualities, and what he took in hand he botched utterly, including the revolutionary movement. Whatever object he set himself to attain was thwarted by himself, the monarchists playing into the hands of the revolutionists, and the anarchists doing the work of reactionaries. Verily it was a mad world!

The year is now coming to an end, passions are no longer white hot, disenchantment has taken the place of enthusiasm and people are comparing notes, casting up accounts and making provisional estimates for the coming year.

The insurrection may now be said to be at an end. It was a movement confined to the surface of the nation; the depths were not stirred, the masses of the people were not carried away. The peasants, who number between eighty and ninety millions, are not attuned to a revolutionary mood; there is probably no more conservative element in the Empire than they. But they are open to suggestion from every side. Ignorant to a superlative degree, they are easily led away from the path of legality. From time immemorial one of the fundamental dogmas of their simple faith has been that all the land belongs to them of right, but that part of it was at some remote period lent to the members of the nobility for a time, and that, the term having now lapsed, the Tsar is desirous of taking back the land from the gentry and restoring it to the lawful owners. But his intention is being thwarted. The marplots are the officials who keep spinning webs of untruth around the Tsar, and thwarting all his generous schemes for the prosperity of his people. Such, in brief, is the simple canvas on which all the grotesque and complex scenes of the past ten months have been embroidered. Agitators from cities and towns assured the credulous rustics that the Emperor had issued a ukase depriving the nobility of their estates and empowering the peasants to take them by force. And their primitive endeavors to accomplish this task form the essence of the agrarian disorders which were supposed to mark the beginning of an unparalleled upheaval. The arrival of professional revolutionists, anarchists and Social Democrats among them imparted political color to the movement, which it lacked. Land is all the peasant wants, more land for nothing, if possible, but at all costs more land.

The Government, which misinterpreted the significance of the disorders in the rural districts as completely as did the revolutionists, finally discerned its mistake. Too terrified at first to take measures calculated to ward off the apparent disaster, it has since done as much for the peasantry as remedial legislation can effect. Last month I ventured to foreshadow a most important series of laws, the object of which would be to strike off

the remaining fetters from the peasant and render him wholly free. I wrote, "By the time this article is in the hands of the readers of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW a series of remedial measures will have been promulgated by which the Premier hopes to score a victory and restore permanent peace to his country." On November 24th that set of reforms was officially published, and at this moment all Russia is discussing its merits. On one point all parties would appear to be agreed: the ukase embodying the new statutes will effect a revolution. The village commune, in which many idealists once perceived a peculiarly Russian institution of the highest economic and social value to the State, is henceforth to be a voluntary association, each member of which may leave it whenever he wishes, becoming the sole and full proprietor of his farm. The chief objection of the radicals to the measure is that, although it changes the destinies of over eighty million Russians irrevocably, it was enacted without the assent of the people's representatives. Technically, however, the Premier was right in promulgating the new law, because in form it is but the interpretation of an old one. But, in reality, it is a revolution from above, which among other consequences takes the wind out of the sails of the radical parties whose leverage in the country is being rapidly narrowed.

In this manner M. Stolypin has undoubtedly scored a success, which will sooner or later manifest itself in the shape of a solid breakwater against which the revolutionary wave may dash itself to spray. Yet that agrarian law is only one of the Government schemes, of which some are to be realized before the Duma meets, while others are to be laid before the nation's representatives. Of the former category, by far the most important and most hotly contested bill contains a number of clauses abolishing the restrictive measures still in force against the Jews. It was high time, foreign critics remark. And yet it required a considerable degree of courage in any Russian Minister to tackle such a thorny question as this without first securing the support of the nation's spokesmen. But, on the other hand, it needs a still higher degree of courage to ignore the matter wholly, and to withstand the enormous pressure brought to bear upon the Tsar's advisers by Jewish capitalists, Liberal journalists and enlightened men of letters throughout the globe. For Russia needs and will long continue to need money from abroad, and the Jews have made it



known to the last three Russian Ministers of Finance that unless a decisive step is taken in the direction of enfranchisement, there will be no foreign loans, no friendly appreciation of the Government's acts in the foreign press. And it is further clear from other symptoms that there will not be any peace from the Jewish population at home.

The statutes at present in force which regulate the unenviable position of the Jews are antiquated, obsolete and unjust. Dating from various epochs, they reflect conflicting moods, mark noteworthy fluctuations, and in many cases eliminate each other. But, besides the statute laws, there is a set of orders and provisional measures which are devoid of the essential characteristics of laws, having been issued without the previous knowledge and assent of the Council of the Empire. These are most irksome and galling. Thirdly, there are the "authoritative interpretations" of all these laws and by-laws; and these may be truly said to constitute the acme of personal caprice, the ideal of petty persecution. It would, doubtless, be a gross exaggeration to affirm that during the past twenty-five years the Russian Government set itself to devise a series of restrictive and in some cases intolerable measures from which the Jews have no legal means of escape. Yet that is one of the direct and salient consequences of the action and inaction of the Tsar's successive advisers. To-day there are as many prescriptions and orders respecting the Hebrew subjects of Nicholas II in the Russian Code as there are in the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. And some of them are equally minute. But they are mostly honored in the breach. Connivance at their violation is one of the never-failing sources of the extra income of the police, and the anti-Jewish penal laws are one of the many fountains of corruption which have turned the Empire into an Augean stable. And the time for cleansing it has come.

Hitherto, every Minister, every Government, every adviser of the Tsar recoiled shudderingly from the responsibility involved in remedial legislation. In theory, they would go to any length. The custom of the more liberal-minded dignitaries, therefore, was to pose as friends of the Jews, to proclaim their firm belief in the necessity of removing all the disabilities without exception from which the Hebrew population suffered, but to add that this was an act which no individual would or could take upon himself.

The repeal of the anti-Jewish laws must be voted by the people's representatives in the Duma. That line might have been followed by the present Cabinet had it not been for the strong representations made by foreign Jews and foreign Governments, to the effect that, if the Government be as completely master of the situation as its agents affirm, it can readily strike off many of the disabilities which at present handicap the Jews. The upshot is M. Kokovtseff's project, which would entitle a great number of the persecuted people to circulate freely throughout the Empire. For instance, all those who have freely served as soldiers in the army would enjoy that right, which would also be conferred upon persons who had passed through certain intermediate educational establishments or who had learned trades and crafts. Moreover, the only limitation of the rights thus bestowed would consist in the prohibition to own land anywhere outside the Pale of Settlement. But all the limitations which diminish the rights now enjoyed by Jews who are enfranchised—such, for instance, as the prohibition to reside in certain military and other specially guarded districts—would disappear.

This measure seems moderate, reasonable, timely. Indeed, most people will characterize it as too moderate. But many of those who know the temper of the Russian people are of opinion that the measure ought to have been either adopted earlier or postponed until the Duma meets. For it is too inadequate to satisfy the Jews, and too liberal to please the bulk of the Christians. The truth is that, if once the Jewish problem is seriously discussed, the only remedy which any dispassionate politician can propose as adequate is complete enfranchisement. That and that only would be logical, just, definitive. Yet it would be perilous to promulgate it without the support of a strong Duma. The present Cabinet hints through its semiofficial organ, the "*Rossia*," that the coming Duma will have it in its power to pass such a law if it wishes.

Meanwhile all Russia is in a ferment. The bare thought that the Jews will soon be free to settle in the Empire wheresoever they list is gall and wormwood to millions of Russians; to the peasants who hate the Jews on religious or economic grounds or simply because they have been deliberately prejudiced against them, and to the monarchist party in the press, in the universities, at the bar, in the army and navy, the Church, and among

bureaucrats and literary men, because that political group regards the Jews as disseminators of anti-monarchist doctrines. Philippics have been delivered against the bill in various towns and cities; conditional excommunications have been fulminated against the Government should it carry the measure, petitions have been forwarded by telegraph and by post to the Emperor beseeching him to hold his hand, and to refuse to give the Jews "the means of destroying the Russian Empire and founding a Jewish State on its ruins." The Government organ replied in a vehement article which provoked the wrath of M. Gringmuth, one of the leaders of the reactionaries, who attacked it as the work of a Jewish pen in the employment of Count Witté. As a matter of universal belief it was written by the Premier himself. The piquancy of the situation lies in the work of mine and countermine which is carried on by influential personages, all of whom are supposed to be cooperating with each other, whereas one-half of them are secretly sapping the foundations of the structures raised by the other half. It can hardly be termed a secret that the heads of the Court Party are bitterly opposed to Stolypin's bill. That may be wisdom on their part, or folly; there is something to be said on both sides. But, unfortunately, the opinion unfavorable to the measure is not uttered to the official responsible for bringing it in, but to third parties whose cue is to assail him. If obstacles were openly thrown in M. Stolypin's way by the Court Party, he would probably tender his resignation, a contingency which fills them with dread. In lieu of frank remonstrances, therefore, they have recourse to secret expedients. Always in touch with the reactionary party of the "Genuine Russian People," they let loose the latter against Stolypin and his colleagues. And forthwith an agitation begins in a series of petitions to the Tsar, and bids fair to end in a series of anti-Jewish riots. Already telegrams have been forwarded in large numbers and articles hinting at the massacre of the Hebrews followed. And now the question is, Will M. Stolypin allow himself to be intimidated and give up the intention of relieving the Jews before the Duma meets? If he retreats before the "Genuine Russian People," he will forfeit his prestige throughout the country, even among those who deem the present moment inopportune for a Jewish Relief Bill. And if he carries his point, he will be decried as a traitor who sold his

fatherland to the Jews; and, possibly, a sequel of sanguinary riots may render the measure memorable in Russian annals.

Everybody is asking, Will the second Duma be better than the first? Will it accept the present Constitution, with its drawbacks, as offering sufficient leverage for helpful legislative work, or will it imitate its predecessor and sacrifice the real for the imaginary? There is not any one in the Tsardom whose acquaintance with the temper of the people is so intimate, and whose authority among Russians is so widely recognized, that he could foretell the result of the elections and have his forecast accepted. Symptoms are numerous and unconvincing. In the provinces, for instance, the Zemstvo elections have ended in the utter defeat of the extreme popular parties and the return of conservatives. On the other hand, the Constitutional Democratic party, by incorporating passive resistance in its programme—passive resistance, too, of a kind which must of necessity culminate in active resistance and bloodshed—has forfeited its right to be treated as a constitutional group, and has been bracketed by the Government with the revolutionists. In a word, many of the signs and tokens of the moment are construed by friends of the Cabinet as pointing to a conservative or moderate Duma, which will accomplish something for the nation.

And yet—it is nearly always the improbable that happens in Russia. Before the first elections took place, the Government was firmly convinced that a majority of conservative deputies would be returned by the peasants. They were so certain of the peasants that there was a majority of the Cabinet in favor of extending the franchise and introducing universal suffrage. But they were mistaken. In the Duma the bulk of the opposition deputies were representatives of the peasantry. That proves that even Russians who have every facility for acquainting themselves with the mood of the population are liable to be utterly wrong in their forecasts. Personally, I am disposed to believe that, even if a large number of seemingly moderate peasants manage to get elected, they may prove so amenable to opposition influences that they will follow the lead of the radicals, call the authority of the Government in question, obstruct legislation, provoke a second dissolution, and bear out the opinion of those who maintain that representative democratic institutions cannot for generations be engrafted upon the Russian people. *Qui vivra verra.*